
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Record Rainfall Creating Water Hazards

GRAND RAPIDS – The Kent County Health Department and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality issued **a no-contact advisory** for the Grand River until further notice.

“Wastewater treatment facilities are doing their best to keep up with the excess capacity,” said Adam London, acting Health Officer for the Kent County Health Department. “The amount of sewage overflow is not just an environmental concern, but also a public health concern. Contact with the water could lead to illness in animals and humans.”

In addition to the no contact advisory, London suggests staying away from creeks and rivers until flooding recedes. “Right now, water is continuing to rise. Walking near these locations can become dangerous in a matter of minutes. We also advise against recreational use of rivers, such as kayaking,” London added.

Until the flooding event passes, the health department is asking all residents, regardless of water and sewer type, to use water conservatively. The flooding could also have a significant impact on homeowners with septic systems or well water. If you have a well head that is submerged in flood waters, do not use water for potable use, such as cooking, drinking, and brushing your teeth. Once the water recedes, have it tested for contamination, before allowing potable use again.

Please note that due to rising flood waters, portions of Kent Trails and the trails at Millennium Park are covered in water. Flooded areas may contain debris or be subject to strong currents or rapidly rising water, and should not be traveled at this time. For public health and safety reasons, the Kent County Parks Department highly recommends people avoid using the trails until the waters subside.

We have more information on what to do after the flood at:

<http://www.accesskent.com/Health/EmergencyPrep/pdfs/AftertheFlood.pdf>

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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